CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

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DENMARK

Two Kings Present at Church Dedication.

Last month a rather unusual church dedication took place in Copenhagen when the new Norwegian seamen's church was opened. The Norwegian King Olav and the Danish Royal Couple together with four Norwegian Bishops and one Danish were present at the ceremony. This is explained by the fact that the funds for the erection of the church have been collected in Norway and Denmark as a gift from the two nations on the occasion of the golden jubilee of the Norwegian King, Haakon the Seventh, who was Danish of birth. King Haakon did not live to see the church completed, but he has presented the church with the altar silver and it is named after him, King Haakon's Church.

At the dedication service which was transmitted over the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish broadcasting and television services the Norwegian Primate, Bishop Johannes Smemo, Oslo, delivered the sermon in which he dwelt on the great importance of King Haakon to Norway, after which he dedicated the church. This took place on the 53-years' anniversary of the departure of the then Prince Carl of Denmark in order to become King of Norway.

After the dedication ceremony a reception was held in the Town Hall for 1.500 guests. Here King Olav, among others, addressed the gathering and expressed his gratitude at such a beautiful and living monument in memory of his father.

The church and adjoining assembly rooms for the use of Norwegian seamen and Norwegians residing in Copenhagen has cost 2.5 million Danish crowns of which the 800.000:- crowns have been collected in Denmark, the remainder in Norway.

Clergyman Accused of "Catholicizing Tendencies".

Recently the editor of the Grundtvigian weekly "Dansk Kirketidende", former Minister of Church Affairs, Dean Carl Hermansen, sharply attacked certain clergymen within the Lutheran National Church, accusing them of "Catholicizing tendencies", and this attack has given rise to a lively discussion. The attack is directed against a certain minister, mentioned by name, in particular, in the

Diocese of Haderslev. He wears an Anglican clerical collar, goes to confession by a neighbouring clergyman, says Low Mass, puts flowers in the church in front of a picture of the Virgin Mary and "reserves" the eucharistic elements, i.e. saves them for later use. It is this "reservation" in particular which the article is against and describes as an open denial of the Evangelical Lutheran conception and a sign that one has gone far into the Roman Catholic teaching about the Transubstantiation in the Eucharist.

In an interview with the "Kristeligt Dagblad" the clergyman in question explains that he uses a clerical collar simply to show that he is a minister; that it is just as important for a clergyman to go to confession as it is for laymen who are advised to make use of the confession; and that Low Mass, i.e. a communion service without a sermon, is being used at other times, e.g. at clergymen's conventions. As to the flowers at the picture of the Virgin Mary he finds it quite natural to pay homage to her memory in this way on Lady Day, for instance, just as it is custom to put flowers on the graves of one's dear deceased relatives. The "reservation" of the eucharistic element is only meant as an expression of reverence and proper treatment of the wine and bread which has been consecrated, but not used at the communion service.

"Kristeligt Dagblad" does not feel that the "Catholicizing tendencies" are particularly alarming, but warns against the danger inherent in them, nevertheless. Thus it is emphasized in a leading article that the word "reservation" should not be used as it is historically tainted. There can be no question of heretics unless the consecrated communion elements are regarded and worshipped as the Body and Blood of Christ outside the communion service also. At ordinary times the flowers in front of the picture of Mary would be no more than a nice custom, the paper continues, but it should not be practised at a time when the Roman Catholic Church has elevated the Virgin Mary to a position which at least has no foundation whatsoever in Holy Scripture, and even must seem to an Evangelical Christian to be the most flagrant contradiction of anything which the Scriptures ascribe to any human being other than the "Son of Man".

The Ecumenical Organization Simplified.

During the past 11 years there have been two ecumenical youth organizations in Denmark, viz. the Ecumenical Youth Committee and the Ecumenical Youth Council. In future there will be only one: The Ecumenical Youth Council, in as much as the Youth Committee has dissolved itself and become merged with the reconstructed Youth Council.

The reason for the establishment of the two youth organizations at the time was the fact that the YMCA and the YWCA as well as the Grundtvigian youth associations did not wish to be members of an organization which collaborated with the World Council of Churches. Consequently the Youth Committee was set up by a number of other youth organizations belonging to the National Lutheran Church and the Free Churches, but not including the above mentioned organizations, and the Youth Committee became the contacting organ of the World Council of Churches. The Youth Council was subsequently founded as a joint organ for the Youth Committee, the YMCA and the YWCA and the Danish Youth Associations. Since the latter three are not now opposed to

working in direct contact with the World Council of Churches, the Youth Committee has been dissolved and the Youth Council taken over its staff.

As mentioned above, the Youth Council has been reconstructed and the objects clause states that it wishes to further the mutual understanding between the affiliated organizations, to work for the spreading of knowledge about the ecumenical work, and to look after the practical connection between the affiliated organizations and the ecumenical work at home and abroad.

FINLAND

General Satisfaction with Evangelical Drive.

The Evangelical drive "The Church and the Town" which took place in Helsinki (Helsingfors) from November 1st - 16th after a long time's careful prepartion, was generally very successful. The most valuable part of the campaign were the visits paid in advance to all the homes in the city by specially trained laymen and the many contact meetings which were held during the last week of the drive. These meetings took place in homes, congregational halls and assembly rooms for smaller groups of people with the same occupation or, in other cases, for people who were neighbours, and provided an opportunity for informal discussions on topical problems in connection with the Church and modern man. More than 100 such meetings were arranged and it was evident that people appreciated them. This was the first time such contact meetings on a larger scale had been tried and there is no doubt that work along these lines will be continued in the future.

Moreover, the drive had been prepared and was accompanied by a successful advertizing campaign, and a leaflet of 20 pages called "The Church and the Town" giving information about the drive and the work of the Church generally, had been distributed in 150.000 copies immediately before the drive.

The Church Must Contribute Towards Peace.

At one of the meetings held during the Evangelical drive in Helsinki (Helsingfors) last month Bishop Martti Simojoki dealt with the Church in relation to the situation of world politics. Among other things, he said.

"After the Second World War a new understanding arose which aimed at creating decent living conditions for the nations, but instead of this chains have been forged in which humanity is being driven along - where to no one knows. Only an oppressive atmosphere is being felt. A deep depression hangs over the world and frightening clouds are in movement.

It is the task of the Church to devote itself wholeheartedly to the cause of peace in the light of the gospel of Christ. No one will do it if the Church does not. If the Church fails in its duty the fog created by political propaganda will become impenetrable. It is at this very point that the Church throughout the ages has been devilishly tempted: to bow to those in power. Only by becoming ever more firmly rooted in the gospel, by dropping anchor in the world of eternity, the Church may be capable of unveiling the truth in the midst of the

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harsh slogans and highly efficient propaganda of world politics.

All over the world the cry for "peace, order and mutual understanding" is heard from human breasts across all partition walls. In a seemingly hopeless situation we are in danger of giving ourselves up to cynicism and despair. On the other hand, however, we are tempted to keep at arm's length all the problems connected with the conflicts between the nations and groups of people which seem insoluble, in order to withdraw into our own private and peaceful world."

40-Years' Anniversary of the Orthodox Church.

On November 26th it was 40 years since the Orthodox Church in Finland became nationally independent by an "ordinance about the Greek-Orthodox Church community". The anniversary was celebrated by a function in Kuopio at which the ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople was represented by the Metropolitan James of Melita and the Patriarchate of Moscow by the Metropolitan Nikolaj. The Lutheran bishop in Kuopio, Bishop Eino Sormunen, was also present and the President of the Republic, President Urho Kekkonen, sent a message. An Orthodox museum was opened in Kuopio in connection with the anniversary.

The Orthodox Church in Finland numbers 67.000 members. It constitutes an archdiocese under the Patriarchate of Constantinople with a widely independent status and this has been approved by the Patriarchate of Moscow.

Is the Orthodox Church Too Nationalistic?

In connection with the 40-years' anniversary of the Orthodox Church the "Församlingsbladet" a weekly printed in Swedish has interviewed the author Tito Colliander who teaches Orthodox religious knowledge in the Swedish-speaking schools in Helsinki (Helsingfors). The author reminds the readers that although the main part of the 67.000 Orthodox Christians are Finnish-speaking Karelians who formerly lived on the Lake Ladoga, but are now spread all over the country, there is also a Swedish-speaking minority, numbering 1.000 people in Helsinki (Helsingfors) alone, besides the almost 5.000 Russian members.

Tito Colliander says that the current problem for the Swedish minority is the nationalistic tendencies of the Orthodox Church which is expressed in the fact that Finnish is the official church language since the Ordinance of 1956. Only in places where the majority, or a considerable part, of a congregation has another mother tongue the service may be conducted in another language. This means, among other things, that many people whose mother tongue is either Swedish or Russian must employ a language foreign to them when going to confession. The author feels that this nationalism is a relic from the Russian church politics connected with Czarism and expresses the hope that this mentality in the Orthodox Church will be superceded, as time goes on, by a wider understanding that there are also other Orthodox Church members than the Karelians. He gives a number of examples as proof that such a change is about to take place.

Bishop Malmivaara Dead.

The former Bishop of Oulu (Uleåborg), Väinö Malmivaara, has died at the age of 79. Bishop Malmivaara was a prominent leader of the pietistic movement and an inspired preacher. As late as last summer he delivered a sermon at the celebration service of the pietistic annual meeting in Lapua (Lappo). From 1927-1932 the Bishop was a Member of the Finnish Parliament.

Record Collection for Christian Social Purpose.

The annual church collection for social activities, called "Common Responsibility" in 1958 totalled the highest amount of money yet, viz. some 90 million Finnish marks. More than 300.000 people have contributed to the collection and 14.000 voluntary workers have collected the money. Half of the funds collected will be used by the local congregations for welfare work, the other half goes to the deaconess institutions in the country and to relief activities in the various dioceses. The greater part of the big donations from institutions and similar places will go to purposes decided by the donors themselves.

The Big Congregations a Judgment on the Church.

The greatest hindrance for the Lutheran National Church to reach all its members with the gospel are no doubt the large congregations, a leading article in the "Församlingsbladet", a weekly in Swedish, states. The article begins by quoting the Scripture verse about the judgment beginning in the House of God, and goes on to say: "It is the sin of our Church that at the moment there are app. 75 congregations with 10.000 - 15.000 members, some 30 with 15.000 - 20.000 members and about 25 with more than 20.000 members. In the last group there are even congregations with more than 50.000 members. More than half of the population lives in these large congregations which are to be found predominantly in towns and industrial centres, - that is, in just those places where the demoralizing forces are particularly active."

The paper draws attention to the fact that all available church statistics from both their own country and others clearly show that the downward trend in church life begins when the number of members in a congregation exceeds 2.000, both as regards church attendance and in all other respects as well. "It must be acknowledged, in the name of truth, that a congregation consisting of more than 10.000 members cannot act as a Christian congregation, but in practice becomes a national register district", the paper writes and warns against the belief that the problem may be solved by appointing youth ministers and other special workers or by dividing a parish into districts between several clergymen serving at the same church. The only proper solution is to make the parishes smaller so that a personal contact between a minister and his congregation may be established.

ICELAND

Proposal that a Congregation Should Not Itself Elect the Minister.

At a recent national church meeting in Reykjavik the Vice President Gisli Sveinsson, former Icelandic Minister to Oslo, expressed the wish that the present form for election of ministers in the Lutheran National Church in Iceland, according to which the members of a congregation themselves choose directly between the applicants, should be abolished. The reason for this proposal was the fact that these elections had now become so politically infested that the Church must ask for a change in order to preserve its self-respect. It was suggested instead that a minister should be appointed by Government on a par with the other civil servants in the country.

NORWAY

The Norwegian Bishops: Stop Production of Nuclear Weapons!

At the Norwegian Bishops' Meeting held last month in Oslo a resolution was passed which begins by quoting the application from the Bishops' Meeting in 1956 to the Government, requesting Government to work for the cessation of experiments with nuclear weapons, and goes on to say:

"The world situation of to-day is such that we find it necessary to further emphasize the statement from the Bishops' Meeting in 1956. It becomes ever more urgent to make all possible efforts at bringing the production of nuclear weapons to an end and stopping rearmaments.

In this connection we refer to the statements by prominent nuclear scientists with regard to the sinister elements of danger inherent in tests with atomic weapons and in atomic warfare. It is our hope that the first steps already taken to bring these tests under international control may be extended to include also the cessation of such tests. We are convinced that our own Government will assist in this matter to the utmost of its ability. And we ask all Christians to join us in persistent prayers for freedom and peace among the nations."

Church Offerings Must Have Permanent Place in the Service.

The offerings must become a permanent part of the church service, it was decided by the Norwegian Bishops' Meeting last month. The Bishops advocate, however, that the various parochial councils should continue to be entitled to decide for themselves towards which purposes the offerings should go. The Bishops' Meeting requests the Church Department to revise the rules for taking collections so that in future collections might be received not only in the special church boxes at the exits from the church, but also in boxes or purses held by persons specially appointed by the parochial council and standing at the exits or in purses passed from hand to hand in the pews and then handed over to the minister who should place them on the altar. Bishop Kristian Schjelderup in Hamar could not agree to this last form for collections, however, as he was afraid that many churchgoers would have a feeling of economic pressure and this might again lead to a further decline in church attendance.

At the Bishops' Meeting a report was received from the committee dealing with the relationship between Church and press. This committee suggested that a special church information office should be set up, but the Bishops could not approve of this as they have no funds for the establishment and running of such an office. Instead they requested the Norwegian Journalist Academy to give the students a more detailed information about church affairs and to the Clergymen's College to let journalists explain problems of the press to the future clergymen. The Norwegian Church Academy was, furthermore, requested to take the subject of Church and Press up for discussion and the official Norwegian News Bureau to appoint a special church staff member.

The Bishops approved a proposal for appointing a students' minister in Oslo and approached the Academical College at the University for the establishment of such a position within the framework of the University. According to press reports this cannot be expected to happen in the near future, however.

A proposal for allowing laymen to assist in the administering of Holy Communion in churches where it might be necessary was received with approval by the Bishops who passed it on to the Diocesan Councils for their opinion. The proposal had already been accepted in principle by the Clergymen's Association.

The Bishops' Meeting set up a committee which is to discuss the practical steps to be taken in connection with a new arrangement for stewardship service in the Norwegian Church, and another committee which is to draw up a proposal for the establishment and financing of a special office for women in the service of the Church. Finally, a proposal from the Clergymen's Association was adopted in principle, dealing with the setting up a somewhat larger commission to revise all service books in the Norwegian Church.

"Clerical Cap" Recommended and "Clerical Collar" Contemplated.

The Liturgic Committee of the Norwegian Clergymen's Association has suggested and the Board recommended that clergymen use the five-pointed Luther-cap as headgear when they have to wear the clerical gown outdoors, for instance at funerals. At present many different kinds of headgear are being worn.

The question of using a "clerical collar" as a kind of everyday uniform has also been discussed. The matter has not been finally settled in the Clergymen's Association, but the Liturgic Committee suggests that it "might possibly be recommended in cases where clergymen might wish to do so". The backward turned white collar, which is used in many other churches, should then be worn together with a black shirt front.

Model Church to be Erected at Agricultural Exhibition.

The big agricultural exhibition in the Ekeberg Square in Oslo during the summer of 1959 will also include a church. The idea originated from private quarters, but will now be carried out in actual life by a committee set up for this purpose and headed by Dean Tord Godal, Oslo. It is to be a model church, intended for smaller towns and industrial centres, and will include a congregational hall and other rooms appropriate for a church working centre. The church is to be open daily and will be used not only for church services, but also for showing

other forms for work as an illustration of church and organizational life so that the model church may also be a really working one. The Norwegian Congregation Institute will serve as secretariate for the scheme.

Lively Discussion on the Justification of Church Plays.

Some time ago a church play group was formed in Oslo under the leadership of Finn Jor, M.A., on the pattern of another one established in Bergen shortly before. This has now given rise to a lively discussio on the justification of the church play as such, opened by the Rector of the Free Theological Faculty, Rev. Carl Fredderik Wisløff. In an article in the Christian daily newspaper in Oslo "Vårt land" he warns against church plays which to his mind have a weakening and superficial rather than a helpful influence on spiritual life. He concludes the article by writing: "In the church the word of God is to be preached, not acted. Do not turn the altar into a stage and our Christian young people into actors."

In a reply to this Mr. Finn Jor draws attention to the fact that the church paly groups are quite aware of the problems connected with this kind of work and are exercizing the greatest care. "It should not be taken to mean that the theatre is to enter the church", he writes. "Should this happen, we shall immediately cease our activities and admit that we were wrong. The church play must be part of the service of preaching. The moment it does not live up to this requirement it has become a failure."

In a leading article the weekly "Var Kirke" goes in for the justification of church plays in our time. It is pointed out that the church play is being used more and more in the churches of other countries and that it may perhaps be specially suited for bringing the gospel to people with whom the Church perhaps has otherwise only a slight connection, for instance among young people. Illustrations play a far greater part in the life of our time than even just a generation ago, and people have become accustomed to the tendency of visual representation of a matter, and the revival of the church play is probably related to this fact. "Through word and action of the participants the church play should give a living, plastic expression of the Christian message. It means the employment of the language of signs as distinct from the spoken word alone. Of course there is a risk also in this field. A critical attitude towards both subject material and effects is necessary. But there is no form for Christian work without any risk" the paper ends.

SWEDEN

Opponents of Women Pastors Set Up a Joint Council.

At a meeting at the end of November representatives of a number of High Church as well as Low Church sections within the Swedish Lutheran National Church opposed to women pastors decided to set up a Joint Council for Church Fellowship Based on Bible and Confession". The meeting took place at Uppsala under the chairmanship of Bishop Bo Giertz, Gothenburg, who was elected member of the executive committee of the Council together with Dean G.A. Danell, Växjö, Dr. Gunnar Prawitz,

Stockholm, Mr. Ernst Staxang, M.P., Stockholm, Mr. Ove Hassler, Linköping, Mr. Axel B. Svensson, Stockholm, and the clergymen, Rev. David Svenungsson and Rev. Tage Bentzer, both Stockholm.

At the meeting Bishop Bo Giertz said that people who until now have belonged to different sections as regards church politics are now standing side by side as a result of the decision of the Church Assembly to approve the Act about giving women access to take holy orders in the Church. "We are united by the classic faith of the Church in the living Word of God", he said, among other things, "and since this is not a doctrine among many others, but the very source from which all Christian teaching and all Christian life originates, our fellowship is founded there where all Christian unity must be founded according to our confessional books.... Our Motto is not to say No to women pastors, but Yes to the Scriptures, to the law of God and to the gospel."

Earlier in the month about 50 High Church clergymen and laymen had met at Hjelmseryd, headed by Dean G.A. Danell. After the meeting a statement was published in which it says that the members felt obliged to declare that "the ordination of women is not valid as it lacks authorization by the Lord of the Church. The Church Assembly has exceeded its powers and has no authority in opposition to the word of God."

The declaration which has been distributed to all the bishops, the Minister of Church Affairs and a number of church leaders and church organizations in foreign countries, goes on: "The crisis in the Church is a result of the decline of the teachings of the Church for a long time and an un-Biblical development of the idea of a national church." It is stated, however, that there is a possibility of remaining in the Church, but the declaration appeals to all to dissociate themselves from the delusion.

At the meeting in Hjelmseryd, a board of co-operation for the High Church sections was established under the name "Fellowship for Church Renewal" and a theological commission was set up to study the problems related to the ordination of clergymen. A fighting fund of 20.000:- Swedish crowns was collected as the economic foundation for further efforts.

Sharp Exchange of Views Between Swedish Bishops.

The establishment of a "Joint Council for Church Fellowship Based on Bible and Confession", in which both High Church and Low Church opponents of women pastors have found each other, has given rise to a sharp debate in the press between Bishop Gert Borgenstierna, Karlstad, on the one side and Bishop Bo Giertz, Gothenburg, and Dean G.A. Danell, Växjö, on the other.

In an open letter in the newspaper "Svenska Dagbladet" Bishop Gert Borgenstierna reproaches the latter two and their fellow-partisans for monopolizing the Bible and the Confession and thus shutting out all those of a different opinion. He appealed to them to give the new Joint Council another name and continued:

"Let us meet in peace and quietness and mutual respect and talk over any controversial issues. Let us make use of all ordinary forms for meetings in our Church in order to call for greater sincerety in regard to the Bible and the Confession and let us do it together. Let us put aside the stage-like zeal for confession and the air of suffer-

ing martyrdom. The day of martyrdom may come and if faithfulness towards the Confession should be demanded, we shall need all our united strength."

Bishop Bo Giertz and Dean G.A. Danell replied that they based their opinion on the Scriptures as well as on a 2.000 years old tradition. They themselves were willing to debate the matter, but did not feel that this would lead to any solution as the divergencies had now had practical results. "Since the Church has now decided to introduce a procedure which we are convinced is in contradiction of the will of God we must claim our right to act in the difficult situation which has been forced upon us. The only thing to do in this tragic situation is to endeavour to fight the inevitable battle with clean weapons, praying to God that He will let truth conquer."

Finally the tragic fact is stressed that one of the two parties must be wrong in important Christian issues and thus deviate from the Bible and the Confession. "Some of us are wrong in the way we read the Bible and cannot have understood what it says there."

Professor Wingren Proposes Negotiations For Union.

In articles in the "Svensk Teologisk Kvartalsskrift" and "Vår Lösen" Professor of Theology, Gustaf Wingren, Lund, proposes that the Lutheran National Church and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden should take up negotiations for a union between them. The Professor refers to the unions and negotiations for unions which have been characteristic of the ecumenical movement during the last few decades. He feels that it ought to be easier for the Lutheran Churches to contemplate the idea of union as they do not attach fundamental importance to church organizations, but only regard them as tools which should be judged according to their expediency and fitness. But where, on the other hand, one seeks to derive an order of the Ministry from the Bible or Christology, the system itself may easily become a matter of controversy.

As to the Swedish Lutheran National Church and the Mission Covenant Church Professor Wingren feels that such great changes have taken place since the dividing lines were first drawn up that negotiations for union ought to make sense now. Especially the common situation in which the two denominations find themselves at the moment with regard to evangelisation should justify investigations into and deliberations on ways and means for a union, the Professor writes.

In an article in "Svensk Kyrkotidning" referring to the proposal the recently appointed Bishop of Härnösand, Bishop Ruben Josefson, has expressed his approval of Professor Wingren's proposal on the part of the Lutheran National Church. The organ for the Mission Covenant Church "Svensk Veckotidning", on the other hand, does not feel that the time is ripe yet for such negotiations. One should rather consider more immediate practical religious tasks, the paper writes and goes on to quote a commentary in a local Mission Covenant Church paper in which co-operation, but no organizational unity is advocated. An essential difference from a Free Church point of view between a National Church and a Free Church is particularly emphasized: "While the Free Church is founded on a personal Christian conviction and thus is a confessional church, the National Church wishes to embrace the whole population regardless of the personal attitude towards Christianity."

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As to the Swedish Lutheran National Church and the Mission Covenant Church Professor Wingren feels that such organizations have taken place since the dividing lines were first drawn up. Especially the common attitude for union ought to make sense now. Especially the common attitude in which the two organizations find themselves as they respond with regard to evangelization should justify investigations into and deliberations on ways and means for a union, the Professor writes.

In an article in "Svensk Kyrkotidning" referring to the proposal the recently appointed Bishop of Härnösand, Bishop Bengt Jonsson has expressed his approval of Professor Wingren's proposal. Within part of the Lutheran National Church, the organ for the Mission Covenant Church "Svensk Veckotidning", on the other hand, does not feel that the time is ripe yet for such negotiations. One should rather consider more immediate practical religious tasks, the paper writes and goes on to quote a commentary in a local Mission Covenant Church paper in which co-operation, but no organizational unity is advocated. An essential difference from a Free Church point of view between a National Church and a Free Church is particularly emphasized: "While the Free Church is founded on a personal Christian conviction and thus is a confessional church, the National Church wishes to embrace the whole population regardless of the personal attitude towards Christianity."

Ruben Josefson Appointed Bishop of Härnösand.

Director Ruben Josefson, Uppsala, has been appointed Bishop of Härnösand in succession to Archbishop Gunnar Hultgren. The new Bishop is 51 years old. He is a Doctor in Divinity and has been a lecturer at the University of Uppsala for a number of years. Since 1941 he has been the editor of the weekly "Svensk Kyrkotidning" which is published in connection with the Clergymen's Association. In articles in this paper he has declared himself positively inclined towards allowing women to take orders.

Bishop H. Ljungberg Consecrates Bishops in Africa.

At the end of November Bishop Helge Ljungberg, Stockholm, started on a two months' journey to Africa where he is to visit the Swedish mission fields. In Johannesburg he is to consecrate the new Bishop of the Zulu Church, Bishop Helge Fosseus, and at the end of January he will also consecrate the new Bishop of South Rhodesia. For this see the Board of Mission of the Church of Sweden has appointed the missionary Dean Arvid Albrektson. Bishop Albrektson is 53 years old. Since 1932 he has been a missionary in South Rhodesia, where he became the chairman of the mission in 1949. The mission of the Church of Sweden in South Rhodesia was started in 1903. In 1957 there belonged to this field 62 missionary workers, 6 African ministers, 77 evangelists and 428 teachers. The number of baptized members at the beginning of 1958 was 10.788.

The "Thursday Group" in Parliament Celebrates 70 Years' Anniversary.

At the end of November the "Thursday Group" in which Christian Members of Parliament from all the various church communities meet for common Bible study every Thursday, celebrated its 70 years' anniversary In the course of years no less than 233 Members of Parliament from practically all the Parties have belonged to the Group which at the moment counts some 40 members from 9 different denominations. At the meetings all political as well as all controversial subjects in church politics are banned and the emphasis placed on that which is common to all.

The anniversary was celebrated by a special service in the Bethlehem Church in Stockholm.

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The "Thursday Group" in Parliament Celebrates 10 Years' Anniversary.

At the end of November the "Thursday Group", in which Christian Members of Parliament from all the various church communities meet for common Bible study every Thursday, celebrated the 10 years' anniversary. In the course of years no less than 239 Members of Parliament from practically all the Parties have belonged to the Group which at the moment counts some 40 members from 5 different denominations. At the meetings all political as well as all ecclesiastical subjects are changed politics are banned and the emphasis placed on that which is common to all.

The anniversary was celebrated by a special service in the Bethlehem Church in Stockholm.